

Earth week panel discusses NW energy

By PAUL WALDSCHMIDT
Of the Emerald

A panel discussion Thursday night on the future of the Northwest's energy supply produced a variety of ideals, but no agreement on how that supply could be stretched to the year 2000.

The forum, sponsored by the University's Survival Center as part of its Earth Week program, attracted 20 spectators to the Eugene City Hall.

Panel members included Mike Katz, a Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) economist, who worked on a BPA energy policy study, Jim Blumquist, Northwest energy coordinator for the Sierra Club, Hugh Smith, a major author of the Pacific North-

west Utilities Conference Committee (PNUCC) regional power bill, Peter Sage, with Congressman Jim Weaver's office, and Bob Zagorin, environmental researcher.

Katz outlined a number of possible scenarios describing the region's power situation over the next two decades. He said state and local government's influence of these scenarios was limited. He said it would take direct federal intervention to influence most of them. It is important, he said, to distinguish what is theoretically possible and what is practical to improve the energy picture.

Katz described the region's uses of energy available to it. He said 23 percent of the energy consumed in the Northwest is in the form of electricity, which is twice

the amount consumed nationally on a per capita basis.

Petroleum accounts for 52 percent of the energy, which is about seven percent less than nationally. Natural gas, coal, nuclear and wood accounts for the rest.

Katz broke the energy consumption down by sectors. Transportation accounts for 36 percent of the energy consumed, with two-thirds of that going to private automobiles. Industry uses 34 percent; the largest consumer being the paper industry. The home sector uses 19 percent. Space heating and hot water heating uses 80 percent of that share. Eleven percent goes to other building such as business and public.

He said the BPA's report has been criticized because its forecast of future energy needs was cited as too low. Katz defended the forecast by pointing out the report's high forecast is about four percent higher than forecasts by utilities and only slightly lower than the utilities for its medium and low forecasts.

The report concludes that the cost of overbuilding for future power needs is not as great as underbuilding and running the risk of energy shortages.

The next three panelists, Zagorin, Blumquist and Sage, criticized the PNUCC bill.

Zagorin said the utilities are pushing for a regional power bill for two reasons. He said BPA contracts which guarantee low rates to aluminum companies are due to run out in the 1980's and the power may then be made available to public utilities.

Secondly, BPA's purchase authority which is used to help provide financing for the construction of thermal generating plants will soon be exhausted.

Zagorin said BPA's authority to guarantee the purchase of power from the thermal plant means consumers will pay higher rates. He criticized the construction of thermal power plants in Eastern Washington as costly and said the developers are making mistakes that the public has to pay for.

Not all industries which use large amounts of energy, he said, produce significant employment. He said a study shows that the Northwest aluminum industry uses about a third of the region's energy and only produces three percent of the region's jobs.

Blumquist said that the BPA and the utilities began to realize by

the late 40's and early 50's that they were running out of dam sites and began making plans to incorporate thermal power into the region's power supply.

He said, however, that the studies failed to consider conservation and more efficient technology as ways of creating more energy. It is not too late, he said, to re-evaluate these faulty assumptions.

Smith defended the PNUCC bill as a compromise solution that provides for savings from conservation efforts but also provides for the construction of more power plants, both nuclear and coal.

He said an increase in the energy supply is needed to provide for an increase in the labor force and the need for new jobs. "Every new job requires an increase in energy."

Smith discounted the effects of conservation as a way of freeing up more energy. He said it is difficult to tell how much conservation will work. People are already conserving, he said, and it would be difficult to encourage them to conserve more.

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EARTH WEEK

Democratic candidate for governor Emily Ashworth will contribute to Environment Day of Earth Week '78 with a noon speech on "Energy in Oregon Politics."

Ashworth strongly opposes nuclear energy and the use of herbicides in Oregon's forests.

The Trojan Decommissioning Alliance, Mobilization for Survival and Citizens Against Toxic Sprays will present films from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., running continuously in the downstairs lobby of the EMU, outside the Survival Center.

The films include "Lovejoy's Nuclear War," the story of Sam Lovejoy's fight against nuclear power in Massachusetts, "The Last Resort," "Radiation and Health," "More Nuclear Power Stations," and the "Harmon Seaver Story," a film about herbicides.

Earth Week will end Saturday, with a benefit dance in the EMU at 8:30 p.m. Dakota will play; admission is \$1.50.

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